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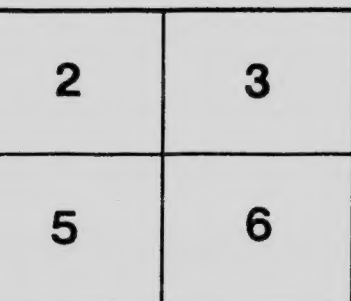
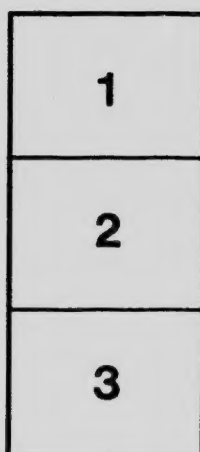
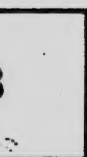
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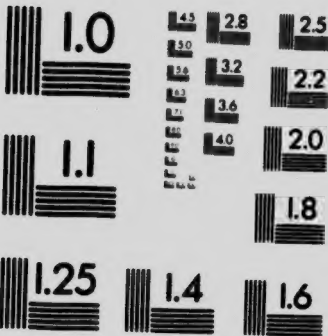
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## PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
(STATISTICS BRANCH).

### British Columbia Crop and Live-stock Report. Preliminary Statement for Year ending December 31st, 1915.

By A. B. TWEDDLE, ASSISTANT STATISTICIAN.

#### WEATHER.



THE spring of 1915 was generally favourable for farm operations. Vegetation at the end of April was ten days ahead of the usual dates, but cool, dry weather immediately following over the Lower Mainland somewhat checked growth in that section. Soil-humidity in the Lower Mainland section was good at the outset, but deficient rainfall during vegetable-growth greatly reduced such crops, as well as pastures. Rainfall and snow on the Upper Mainland section were below normal during the preceding winter, which in April caused some uneasiness in the dry belts and fruit sections, where growers are usually dependent upon irrigation; but later rainfall, being much in excess of normal, rendered little irrigation necessary and resulted in abnormal growth.

This excessive rainfall also proved most beneficial to cattle-ranges, where excellent green pasturage was found at the end of June, when usually the hillsides are dry and brown.

Very little damage was reported from late and early frosts or wind-storms.

#### FIELD CROPS.

##### GRAINS.

The area of grains shows an increase over 1914 of 36 to 38 per cent., being chiefly attributed to oats and wheat. The total yield of all grains exceeded 1914 by nearly 50 per cent., while the total value, in spite of decreased prices, is 30 per cent. greater.

Of the total area of grains, 73 per cent. was oats, which show an average yield for the Province of 77.58 bushels, the highest average being 84 bushels in the Northern District and 80 bushels in the Lower Mainland, while the minimum average was 53.6 bushels in the Okanagan and Boundary Districts.

Wheat yields ranged from 26 bushels in the Eastern to 40 bushels in the Northern District, or an average of 31.16 for the Province, being 5 bushels above the 1914 record.

All grains graded unusually high in quality, while wheat in many instances weighed as high as 65 and 70 lb. and oats 40 to 45 lb. per bushel.

The above results in grades clearly demonstrate the value of proper seed-selection, which has been strongly urged by the Department and which growers are becoming alive to.



Of the total area of grains in 1915, 15 per cent. was cut as dry fodder, and this, with the oat-straw of the year's crop, had an unusually good feeding quality, especially where grown on the higher, heavier soils.

#### FODDERS.

Throughout the Coast sections, where the largest areas of cultivated meadow are found, the hay acreage decreased from 1914, having given way to an increased grain area; but in other sections contiguous to new railways the increase slightly more than offset the above decrease, resulting finally in an increased area being shown for the entire Province.

Yields of clover and timothy averaged from 1.7 to 2.6 tons, or an average of 2.3 tons for the Province, being the same as 1914.

Alfalfa in some sections is rapidly coming into favour, especially in the Okanagan Valley, where the area is becoming extensive. Yields averaged from 4 to 5 tons, in most cases, from three cuttings.

The grain-hay cut averaged 25 per cent. greater than in 1914, or 2.44 tons per acre.

Considerable damage occurred to the hay-crop in the Northern Okanagan and Shuswap Lake sections through excessive moisture at cutting-time. Elsewhere the quality was good, especially in the Lower Mainland and Islands sections, where curing weather was ideal, and much less shrinkage was reported at baling-time than during other years of greater rainfall.

Fodder-corn in connection with dairying is rapidly increasing in area, and, while as yet comparatively small, has increased from less than 200 acres in 1913 to over 1,700 acres in 1915, the largest percentage being found along the Fraser River, in the Lower Mainland section, where the average yield has almost doubled since 1913, the highest being 20 and the average 12 tons, while that for the entire Province was 11.42 tons for 1915.

Sufficient experimenting in seed-selection and cultural methods has been carried on to convince growers that this crop can be successfully matured in many southern sections of the Province, and especially in the Okanagan Valley, where sufficient seed can be successfully produced for the entire Province.

The introduction of this crop is responsible for the construction of nearly 200 silos in the past two years, with an average capacity of 50 to 60 tons.

Prices of hay have ruled from 12 to 14 per cent. lower than 1914, so that there is a decrease in the total value of fodders of 11 per cent.

#### VEGETABLES.

The only marked change in the acreage of vegetables was with field-roots, which show an increase of nearly 50 per cent. over 1914, being accounted for almost entirely by new acreage in sections recently opened along new railways and the Peace River section in Northern British Columbia.

Of the total acreage of vegetables, 68 per cent. was potatoes, which in yield averaged 5.54 tons, or 11 per cent. less than 1914 and 8 per cent. less than the average for the two years 1913 and 1914. Yields in the Upper Mainland were generally above normal, but in the Lower Mainland and Islands sections, where over 43 per cent. of the total acreage was found, yields were 35 per cent. less than 1914, due chiefly to the dry weather.

Prices, while very discouraging at first, have since risen, but still will average below those realized in 1914. The quality at pitting-time was not affected to any extent by blight.

Field-roots and other vegetables were above normal in yield in all sections, except the Lower Mainland and Islands, where they were from 30 to 35 per cent. below 1914.

The turnip-crop in particular suffered much from dry weather and aphids.

The yield of hops proved slightly less than 1914.

#### FRUITS.

Fruit production in 1915 was the largest in the history of the Province, being 12 to 15 per cent. greater than 1914, which was in turn 20 per cent. greater than 1913 and 30 per cent. over 1912. The total value of the crop will be 60 to 65 per cent. greater than 1914, despite increased production and financial conditions.

The yield of plums, prunes, and small fruits was about equal to 1914, but prices better. The cherry yield was much larger than 1914, but brought low prices.

Peaches were less and apricots considerably greater in yield than in 1914. The closing of some canneries in the Okanagan District caused an increased quantity of lower grades of these fruits to be marketed at unsatisfactory prices owing to the quality. Good peaches and apricots sold at higher prices than in 1914.

Pears showed an increase in production of 25 per cent. over 1914, with a similar increase in returns.

Apples, both early and late, brought much higher prices than 1914, despite increased production.

Excessive precipitation in the fruit districts caused much splitting of cherries and rotting of plums, while scab was prevalent among apple-orchards.

The increased production in 1915 in all tree-fruits is chiefly attributable to the large percentage of young orchards now coming into commercial bearing rather than to the older orchards, which bore only a light crop. Present indications point to a large yield of most tree-fruits in 1916.

#### DAIRY PRODUCTS.

The increased number of creameries in new and older dairy sections of the Province has been responsible for an increased production of butter, and while the supply of fresh milk fell off in the lower part of the Fraser Valley as the result of pasture shortage, the production for the Province will show an increase, but not to the extent anticipated. The total value of dairy products will show an increase of 10 to 14 per cent.

There is practically no cheese manufactured in the Province.

#### POULTRY AND EGGS.

The poultry industry suffered noticeably, especially during the earlier part of the year, owing to the high prices of feed, thus forcing a large quantity of poultry on the market for consumption at consequent low prices. The total number of poultry in the Province at the end of the year showed a decrease from 1914 of 25 per cent. The production of eggs decreased 23 per cent., while prices averaged 13 to 15 per cent. lower than 1914, resulting in a decreased total value in production of poultry and eggs of 39 per cent. from 1914.

#### LIVE STOCK.

Substantial progress has been made in the increase of all live stock during the year, except hogs, which show a falling-off in the year's production of over 3 per cent.

Horses showed an increase of 3 to 5 per cent. in numbers, but prices ruled 5 per cent. lower.

A very marked increase occurred in both beef and dairy cattle during the year, it being estimated that the latter will approach 35 to 40 per cent. of the total number existing in the Province at the beginning of the year. Prices in both instances remained about as in 1914.

Sheep show a substantial increase during the year, whilst prices have remained firm.

#### MEATS.

The number of local cattle, hogs, and sheep placed on the market for consumption has greatly increased over 1914, being respectively 59, 89, and 25 per cent.

The excellent grazing provided through unusual precipitation over range sections resulted in a superior quality of beef.

The increased number of hogs found on the market earlier in the year was due more to the high cost of feeds than to prices, which were below normal.

A feature on the sheep market was the unusual absence of ewes, thus indicating a desire among breeders to increase their herds.

#### SUMMARY.

Despite lower prices ruling for many of the chief products, the Province will be able to show a slight increase in the total value of the year's production, for which credit is largely due to the increased yields of grains and fruits, also to the production of live stock and meats during the year.

Whilst values do not show a corresponding increase to that of production, the latter has had a most important effect in decreasing the importation of agricultural products, especially those from other Provinces in Canada, which show a falling-off in value of 35 to 40 per cent. from 1914. This means a very material financial saving to British Columbia as a whole, when it is considered that in 1914 the total value of imports from other Provinces amounted to nearly \$20,000,000.

The past year has witnessed considerable activity in land-clearing in many sections, this being rendered possible by a 30 to 35 per cent. decrease in the cost of labour, although this will to a certain extent be offset in 1916 by the increased cost of stumping-powder, owing to the rise of raw materials caused by the war.

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#### PUBLICATIONS OF STATISTICS BRANCH, VICTORIA, B.C.

- Bulletin 45.—Agricultural Statistics, 1911.  
" 59.—Agricultural Statistics, 1913.  
" 65.—Agricultural Statistics, 1914.

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